

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STRASB 00096 080448Z

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SUBJECT: ORTOLI'S ADDRESS TO COUNCIL OF EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY

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PAGE 02 STRASB 00096 080448Z

1. IN AN ADDRESS TO COUNCIL OF EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY, FRANCOIS-XAVIER ORTOLI, PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, DISCUSSED RECENT SETBACKS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE EEC AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR CONTINUING EEC - COUNCIL OF EUROPE COLLABORATION.

2. THE ECONOMIC , MONETARY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF MEMBER COUNTRIES - IN A WORD, THE EFFECTS OF THE RECESSION - LAY AT THE HEART OF THE EEC'S CURRENT DIFFICULTIES, ORTOLI STRESSED. THE RECESSION HAD SLOWED THE COMMUNITY'S ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND, MORE IMPORTANT, HAD CALLED INTO QUESTION THE BASIS OF THE EEC ITSELF - THE CUSTOMS UNION, THE FREE CIRCULATION OF GOODS, THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY. UNTIL NOW, IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO PRESERVE ALL OF THESE, BUT ANY AGGRAVATION OF CURRENT ECONOMIC ILLS WOULD CERTAINLY LEAD TO A RENEWAL OF PRESSURES FOR PROTECTIONISM IN EACH OF THE NINE. THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, ORTOLI CONTINUED, HAD EMERGED AS A SECOND MAJOR PROBLEM OF THE EEC. THE FRAMEWORK IN WHICH THOSE ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD WOULD HAVE TO BE AGREED UPON IF THE EUROPE OF THE NINE WAS TO BE "DEMOCRATISED".

3. DESPITE THESE SUBSTANTIAL PROBLEMS, ORTOLI ARGUED, THE EEC COULD BE PROUD OF SEVERAL RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS - NOTABLY IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS. LAST YEAR AT THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE AND THIS YEAR AT THE CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, THE NINE SPOKE WITH ONE VOICE. THE LOME CONVENTION BETWEEN THE EEC AND A NUMBER OF AFRICAN NATIONS CONSTITUTED ANOTHER IMPORTANT EXAMPLE OF THE COMMUNITIES' COMMON DIPLOMACY. ON AN INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL, THE EEC HAD ALSO MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS, ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

4. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, ORTOLI EMPHASIZED THAT INTERNAL RATHER THAN EXTERNAL QUESTIONS TOOK PRIORITY ON THE COMMUNITY S AGENDA. FOR PROGRESS TOWARD EUROPEAN UNIFICATION TO CONTINUE THE NINE MUST MOVE TOWARD EVEN CLOSER ECONOMIC AND MONETARY INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND MUST RAPIDLY ESTABLISH THE MECHANISM FOR THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

5. FINALLY, ON THE PERENNIAL ISSUE OF THE RELATIONS - AND
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PAGE 03 STRASB 00096 080448Z

OVERLAP - BETWEEN THE EEC AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, ORTOLI ASSERTED THAT BRUSSELS RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK AND SOUGHT TO COOPERATE WITH THE COUNCIL WHENEVER THIS COULD BE OF BENEFIT. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE NINE TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO SIGN AS A SINGLE UNIT FOUR COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, ORTOLI ADDED THAT IF THE EEC WAS TO BECOME OTHER THAN A "DRY" ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IT WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE TO MOVE INTO SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AREAS

WITH WHICH THE COUNCIL IS LEGITIMATELY CONCERNED. ORTOLI
ASKED THE ASSEMBLY NOT TO FEAR THIS OVERLAP BUT TO LOOK AT IT
AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS.
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